

EDUCATIONAL FILMS

News of Visual Education in Schools and Homes

Edited by Ruth Hamilton Kerr

THE majority of films for free distribution, listed in catalogues of United States Government bureaus and State universities and industries, are available only on standard width stock. For the present, this eliminates a great deal of film material suitable for home motion pictures, when 16

mm. projectors are used. But the increasing use of this type of projecting machine in homes, schools and churches is creating an ever-growing audience for the educational type of picture sponsored by the government and industry, and in order to reach this audience it may prove necessary to distrib-

ute prints in 16 mm. stock in the near future.

In order to assist members of the League in preparing programs combining both rental material and films borrowed free of charge, the editor of this department is preparing a listing of distributors in various cities

throughout the country, where free films on 16 mm. stock may be obtained. This will not be an attempt to list the films available, but will give all information of interest to League members who wish to write to the distributors for further details.

Kinetic Education

DEFINING the difficulties arising in the production of educational pictures for visual education, C. W. Barrell, director of the Western Electric Motion Picture Bureau, says:

"The film message is kinetic, while the teacher's message is static. Unless we produce educational motion pictures that are an improvement over the static blackboard and textbook method we are not taking full advantage of the remarkable potentialities of films in visual education. There is yet no standard to determine the value of educational pictures, and so far they have served only as supplementary aids in schools. But the educational picture of the future will be more than the teacher's static message translated into motion picture form; it will be a film produced through the joint efforts of educators and technical laboratories, with directors who appreciate the peculiar difference of the kinetic film message from any other kind."

Convention

RECENT developments in the field of visual education were brought out by the speakers at the ninth annual meeting of the National Academy of Visual Instruction held February 27 and 28 at Boston Teachers College. At the first morning session E. C. Routzahn, of the Russell Sage Foundation, spoke on "The Exhibit as a Visual Aid." During the afternoon there were two main subjects covered, "Demonstrations of the Value and Effective Use of Visual Aids" and a symposium on Visual Education, in which State representatives took part.

The second program included reports of committees covering various phases of the visual instruction method. John A. Hollinger, Director of Visual Instruction, Pittsburgh, Pa., gave the report on films.

Bibliography

THE Bureau of Education of the United States Department of the Interior has made up a bibliography on Visual Education for educators and those interested in studying the development of the motion picture in connection with education. It includes reference lists of the outstanding published reports and articles written on this subject, under the following general heads: general references—bulletins, articles and reports from periodicals, school and state publications; a section on special subjects; lantern slides and moving pictures—their uses in educational work; effect of moving pictures upon school children; use in foreign countries; government bureaus lending slides and films free or for a nominal charge; commercial companies furnishing education films and motion picture supplies.

This bibliography may be obtained by writing to the Bureau of Education, United States Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C.

Museum Service

THE motion picture division of the American Museum of Natural History is circulating more than 600,000 feet of motion picture film in the public schools of New York City. These films are lent entirely free of charge to the schools, being delivered to the classrooms by the

Museum messengers and called for at the end of the loan period. Among these films are three sets of "Yale Chronicles of America for American History," many interesting films on natural history, and geographical films that have been taken on special expeditions to foreign countries to obtain a true portrayal of the everyday life of the people. For distribution to any organization in the vicinity of New York City, the Museum has five series from the Bureau of Mines and a group of twelve interesting subjects deposited by the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau. Last year more than 100,000 feet of edited film were added to this library, and during the year the Museum distributed more than 3,300 reels to 122 schools, reaching more than 1,123,700 pupils. This is an increase of more than 100 per cent over the previous year.

Full information on obtaining these pictures may be obtained by addressing George H. Sherwood, Curator-in-Chief of the Department of Public Education, American Museum of Natural History, 77th Street and Central Park West, New York City.

Mineral Films

APPROXIMATELY one hundred educational films have been prepared in the past few years by the Bureau of Mines in cooperation with the mineral industries. The demand for these films for showing by educational institutions, churches, civic bodies, clubs, miners' unions, and other organizations has become so great that the original plan of centralized distribution from the Pittsburgh Experiment Station of the Bureau of Mines has become inade-

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quate. A selected list of the best of these films is now made available at distributing centers located in the different States. The films (of standard width) relate to coal, petroleum, sulphur, iron, asbestos, marble, lead, copper, natural gas, and other minerals.

Enduring Appeal

MODERN screen classics that ten years ago would have been considered of doubtful appeal to the general public because they were "educational" in their subject matter are today exploited as feature pictures. The newest of these is the Martin Johnson jungle film "Simba," which follows "Grass," "Chang," "Moana of the South Seas," "Alaskan Adventures" and "Nanook of the North," to mention notable examples of the type of film which has enduring appeal. And, needless to say, new prints of these same films on 16mm. film for home and school use will augment, rather than lessen, interest in these pictures.

Show Train

TWO railroad cars have been fitted up by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad for a traveling motion picture house, in order to show the film of the memorable pageant held by the railroad in Baltimore last autumn. Employees who were unable to attend the pageant will thus have an opportunity to view the four reels made of the centenary pageant. A coach has been equipped with seats for eighty people and a baggage car in connection serves as an electric generating and heating plant. In addition to standard motion picture equipment, the coach has an Orthophonic Victrola and amplifier and the music supplied corresponds as nearly as possible to the selections played by the Centenary Band.

Teaching Teachers

DEMONSTRATIONS of Visual Education through the medium of motion pictures will be included in the summer quarter courses for school teachers at the University of Virginia, according to the announcement of Dean Charles G. Maphis of the institution. It is planned to have two demonstrations every week during the summer session, the pictures used to be furnished by the Educational Department of Pathe Exchange, Inc., which has on hand a large library of film for classroom use.